DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/DC/HR

REVIEWED BY S W Holmes DATE 7/6/77

RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE

TS AUTH. REASON(S)

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐

DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐

RELEASE DENIED☐

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

745H.00/8-1351

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM AMCONSUL, LAGOS, NIGERIA

DESP. NO. 85

August 13, 1951

DATE

TO MESSAGE CENTER AIR POUCH

PRIORITY

REF

1951 AUG 27 AM 10 43

SUBJECT: Fortnightly Review - July 29 to August 11, 1951

INFO ECA LAB NLRB ce

18 For Dept. Use Only

RECD Aug 25

ACTION NEA

INFO DCR EUR GER OLI E IE UNA USUN AG CAB COMM

POLITICAL

Election Trends

As the elections approach the sympathy of the largest number of ordinary workers and office employees seems to lie with Azikiwe's NCNC, even though many do not appear to know the politics of Azikiwe himself or what the NCNC really stands for.

The Action Group seems to have the sympathy of many Europeans, Syrians, members of the higher income group, and the less politically conscious members of the lower income group to whom the struggle presents itself as being between Ibo and Yoruba. The Action Group has worked hard to see that all its supporters register for the election. No one may register who does not have his tax receipt, and since many prospective voters are delinquent in their taxes, they will be unable to present receipts, and, consequently, will not be permitted to vote.

Each of the principal political parties is claiming success in the primary elections but it is not at all clear at the moment how they will fare in the make-up of the new legislative bodies.

Election Staff and Facilities Inadequate

There was criticism in the press of the registration procedure established for the Nigerian elections, it being alleged that staff and facilities were inadequate to register all voters. It will be recalled that in the Lagos Town Council elections of the fall of 1950 facilities for voting were somewhat inadequate and several thousands of voters were unable to cast their ballots.

Political Parties Agree on Basis of Cooperation

The NCNC and the NPC were reported to have agreed on a basis of cooperation in handling problems of a national character. It is pointed out that the agreement does not constitute a merger, and it is emphasized that all political parties should cooperate in matters of interest to the Nation as a whole.

745H.00/8-1351

SEP 18 1951

HH

AWChilds:mos

REPORTER(S)

UNCLASSIFIED

PREPARATION TIME

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

The Case of Nduka Eze, Pro-Communist Labor Leader

Mr. EZE has not as yet come to trial on the charge of embezzling funds. A few days ago he stated certain monies had been received by the UAC Union from the WFTU but that Mr. EZUMAH, President of the Union, had handled distribution of such funds. The latter has now denied responsibility for the financial troubles of the Union, and has explained the manner in which some £2000-were received from WFTU for support of the Union.

Criticism of Regionalization

The Gold Coast Minister of Commerce, Industries and Mines, Mr. T. HUTTON-MILLS, has publicly criticized regionalization under the new Nigerian Constitution.

Criticisms of New Constitution

The new constitution as published has two main features which are said to be disappointments to Nigerians: (1) The extraordinary powers conferred on the Governor and Lieutenant Governors, and (2) the method of appointment of regional and central ministers. These are reported to have been entirely new and a surprise to all, not having previously been discussed with Nigerians. However, conservative elements feel that in spite of the new constitution's imperfections it still leaves room for Nigerians to demonstrate to the world their capacity for self-government, now and in the future.

Differences between NCNC and Action Group

The two principal political organizations have far more in common than is realized by most voters. Both, of course, like all political organizations, claim to be working for the good of the country and the welfare of humanity. The Action Group promises "freedom for all and life more abundant", while the other "believes in the unity of Nigeria". Three or four years ago the workers stood fairly solidly behind the NCNC, and that organization still has considerable labor support, but with a difference. Today labor is more conscious of its own potentialities as an independent political force. However, Zik's personal popularity as a nationalist is still great and an asset of importance to the NCNC. Against this, the Action Group seems to have superior organization and a better thought-out program for coping with existing national problems.

As regards leadership, professionals are in the saddle in both cases. Zik (of NCNC) and AWOLOWO (of Action Group) are successful, self-made men. Both are hard-working, hold strong views, and profess to be socialists. Superior (political)

organization in the one (Awolowo) is matched by a wider horizon in the other.

The idea of self-government has not been stressed during the election campaign by either party, while it might have been expected to be at the center of the debate. Each party has been content simply to state that it is fighting for immediate self-government, but there the matter ends. In neither campaign is the public told how the political organizations propose to conquer political power. Mainly, the two parties have devoted their energies to tearing each other apart in the daily press and at mass meetings in many parts of the country.

The main political issue is Nigerian Unity vs Regionalization. One side (NCNC) accuses the other of trying to Pakistan-ize the country. The other issues a denial and recriminations follow. If, however, a study of the writings and pronouncements of the two organizations and their leaders over the past few years proves anything, it seems to have been fundamental agreement on a Federation for Nigeria, with regional governments being fully autonomous, according to political observers.

It is difficult to determine just what the two parties are contending for, but the answer seems to lie in the fact that Nigeria is still at the stage in its political life where personalities seem to count more than principles. Neither party will have much influence in elections in the Moslem North, and the Action Group does not operate in the East. One of the main issues of the campaign would appear to be whether Azikiwe will continue to be a powerful influence in the West. Colonial elections generally have two aspects, namely, how much power and responsibility should be transferred from the Colonial Government to the people, and how that power should be shared among local parties. Thus far attention has been concentrated largely on the latter.

Railway Labor Dispute

A dispute between the Railway Workers Union and the railway management, which has been under discussion for several months, flared anew and resulted in the adoption of an undeclared slow-down strike which is said to have reduced railway operations considerably for a time. The original dispute, which had to do with transferring daily rate staff to the permanent rolls, dates back to January, 1951, since which date conciliation meetings have been held. Recently management and workers arrived at an agreement which, to become effective, had to be approved by Government. The Government now states that it has been unable to accept the agreement reached in conciliation on the point of

transferring temporary workers to the permanent establishment. The Government maintains that absorption to the permanent staff is dependent on five years continuous and satisfactory service at daily rates in an equivalent grade, and has informed the Union that it is prepared to agree to any transfers meeting above conditions.

Editorial comment in the independent press is to the effect that it is regrettable that after formal Conciliation proceedings resulted in an agreement between management and the workers, the Government should repudiate that agreement. Doubt is expressed that workers could have faith in the machinery of conciliation and arbitration if one side is not bound by any agreement reached. Comment is also made that the obvious retort to the Government's statement that "This condition that daily paid workers have served for five years was not taken into account in Conciliation Proceedings "is" why wasn't it?"

The Government has also informed the Union that it is "not prepared to discuss with the Union the arrangements made by Government to fill senior posts". That statement grew out of accusations by the Union against several Railway officials (who are Government officials).

Conversations looking toward solving the dispute were continued and on August 2 the Central Executive of the Railway Workers Union suspended the slow-down strike. The General Secretary of the latter explained that it had not been the intention of the Railway Workers Union to paralyze the railway industry. He said the Union only wanted to express its resentment at Government's undue delay in approving the agreement reached between the Union and the railway management in conciliation proceedings. "We suspended the slow-down not only because we have met the management, but because of a suggestion by the conciliator", he further stated and, added "We now await the conciliator's summons to a further meeting at which the Government's decision will be made known to us".

Through the press the Union has indicated that it will not participate in further conciliation meetings unless the Civil Service Commissioner is also present.

Coal Strike

Early in the month there developed a slow-down coal strike at the collieries at Enugu and production was reduced considerably. That threatened to have considerable effect on industries depending on coal, such as power plants, railways, etc. The complaint was that miners were not satisfied with a change in the system of paying their wages which has been recently

introduced. The strike was suddenly called off, and production by August 10 was practically back to normal.

Nigerian Contributions to Youth Festival

It was reported in the press that Nigerian students now attending the University of Leipzig have collected one thousand marks as contribution to General Fund for the purpose of sending youth and student delegates to the World Youth Festival which opened in Berlin on August 4. There is no evidence that this money has been or will be used in the endeavor to bring Nigerian students to Eastern Germany under the scholarship scheme of that Government.

Pan-African Congress Proposed

A news report from London, which appeared in the local press, indicates that plans are afoot to hold a Pan-African Congress in early 1952 in West Africa. It is stated that the purpose of the Congress will be to unify and consolidate the forces of black nationalism in all parts of Africa. The report indicates that Dr. Azikiwe and Dr. Nkrumah (Gold Coast Leader) will be invited to act as joint sponsors of the Congress, the 6th of its kind, and the first to be convened on African soil. The 5th Congress was held in 1945 in Manchester, and was attended by over 200 delegates from Africa, West Indies, North and South America.

ECONOMIC

Shortages Developing

In various fields material shortages are beginning to be felt. Cotton yarn for textile mills is becoming tighter, as are certain hardware lines. Also, of late, the Export Licensing Authority has ordered that in future specific export licenses will now be required for the commercial export to all countries within the sterling area of maize, guinea corn, cassava and gari, yams, yam flour and beans. Exports of such products to countries outside the sterling area will, in addition, require Exchange Control Authorization.

Nigerian Cocoa Top Grade

98% of all cocoa produced in Nigeria today is top grade, according to a recent press release by the Nigerian Government. Some 150 representatives of the Cocoa Survey Section of the

Agricultural Department now regularly visit cocoa farms to teach improved growing methods. In five years they are said to have raised the quality of Nigerian cocoa from very low to a high standard. The Cocoa Marketing Board finances this work.

Wharf Improvement

Some £50,000 are to be spent at once to speed up vessel unloading at Customs Wharf, Lagos. This includes a new customs shed, installation of a mobile crane, new customs launch, doubling of police force, etc.

Ploughing by Tractor

13,500 acres have been ploughed by caterpillar D-7 tractors drawing Davis ploughs - 5,000 in Sokoto Province and 8,500 in Gwandu, Northern Nigeria. In most areas the rice crop was reported to be good.

Expanded Air Service

B.O.A.C. has announced that, because of heavy demand for additional accommodation, eight extra "Hermes" flights will be operated from Accra, Lagos and Kano to London during August, September and October.

Meeting of Nigerian Produce Marketing Co., Ltd., London

This company, selling organization of the produce marketing boards in Nigeria, held its annual meeting a few days ago in Lagos. Among other items that came before the meeting there was discussed the desirability of having Nigerian staff in the London office. Regret was expressed that young Nigerian undergraduates did not appear anxious to take up a commercial career. It was resolved that Nigerian members of the four produce boards should go to London periodically on attachment to the Company to have an opportunity to study and contribute to the selling negotiations of the Company.

New Drug to Immunize Cattle

There will shortly be made an experiment to improve the meat supply situation. A certain number of cattle are to be inoculated with a drug, new here, called Antrycide-Pro-Salt, to protect them as they pass through the dreaded tsetse fly belts on their several hundred mile trek from Kano to the South. In such areas each year many animals succumb to the disease called trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness, due to the tsetse fl .

Action to Control Grain Prices

The scheme adopted in December of 1950 in Kano Province to control the prices of millet and guinea corn, by the intervention of the Kano Native Administration through purchase of urgent stock to control market prices was reported during the last two weeks to have brought about the stability of the prices of these two products. Large parts of the purchase by the Native Administration were despatched to those areas in the provinces which had been hard hit by the poor farming season in the latter part of last year. When the Native Administration stepped into the market for guinea corn in the middle of May of this year prices stood at approximately 55 to 60 shillings per bag compared with 80 shillings per bag in July of 1950, and 70 shillings per bag in May of 1950. Shortly thereafter, as the Native Administration distributed guinea corn to the affected area, the prices fell to 45 shillings per bag at which price it has continued. The result has been that large quantities of corn have come to the market with a 50% saving to consumers compared with the price at the same time last year.

Nigerian Agricultural Program

Crop testing of the Botanical Station at Samaru during the first quarter of the year is reported to have included 24 varieties of rice, 12 varieties of maize, 5 varieties of subterranean clover, 10 varieties of tobacco and 172 varieties of Guinea Corn. These test plantings come largely from India and the United States. Improved methods of increasing meat and milk yield of Nigerian cattle were urged on the northern Fulani tribe by exhibiting practical methods of feeding, periodic animal inspection and water conservation.

OTHER

Labor Representative May Attend Soviet Youth Festival

The General Secretary of the Medical and Health Workers of Nigeria, now in U.K., indicated recently that he might visit the Soviet Zone of Berlin to attend the Festival of Youths and Students for Peace. He is reported to have stated to the press "After self-government events that follow will determine whether Nigeria shall have communism or any other form of government."

Invitation to Peace Festival

An invitation was received by the Nigerian Women's Union to attend the third World Festival of Youths and Students for Peace

which is being held in Berlin. The Nigerian organization replied stating its inability to send delegates at the present time.

Muslim Scholarships

The Society for Promoting Muslim Knowledge has been authorized by the Al-Azhar University, Cairo, to grant 50 annual scholarships to Nigerian Muslims.

Broadcasting Officers to Train in U.K.

Six of the Nigerian staff of the Director of Broadcasting have departed for United Kingdom for training by the British Broadcasting Corporation. This is hailed as a great advent in the history of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service.

Cooperative Societies Now Number More than 1,000

The Registrar of Co-Operative Societies in Nigeria has stated that as of March 31, 1950, there existed 1,092 societies.

Student Processing to be Improved

The Committee for African Students in North America (CASNA) has recently terminated its contract with its American secretary in order that a qualified Nigerian, preferably a Government Senior Service Officer, may fill the position. The result of this closer alignment of CASNA with the Nigerian Government will be an expected increased efficiency in the processing of students and greater cooperation by government officials in the provinces. Assurances will be given that the committee itself shall retain its autonomy.

Trade Union Secretary Will Not Attend ICFTU Congress

Pressure by the British Communist Party appears to have been successful in preventing the multi-trade union secretary of Nigeria from attending the Second Congress of the ICFTU in Milan. The secretary gave all cooperation to the ICFTU delegation when it visited Nigeria early in the year, but appears now to have changed his mind as to further collaboration.

Visit of U.S. Air Mission

A United States Air Mission composed of 5 officers, most of whom are based at the American Legation in Tangier, visited Lagos from August 8-11 in a U.S. Airforce plane, to inspect airport development and port facilities in Nigeria. The group was pleased to find a spirit of full cooperation on the part of

Nigerian Government officials, and the Governor himself entertained them. The Consul General provided housing for the officers, entertained them, and arranged for a full round of consultations with Government officials and others.

A. W. Childs
American Consul General

Copy to Embassy London